

Administration of Barack H. Obama, 2009

**Remarks on House of Representatives Action on Health Care Reform
Legislation**

November 5, 2009

Hi, guys. Hey! Hello, everybody. Please sit down. Good afternoon, everybody. I wanted to come down and just talk a little bit about health care before Robert gives his regular briefing.

I am extraordinarily pleased and grateful to learn that the AARP and the American Medical Association are both supporting the health insurance reform bill that will soon come up to a vote in the House of Representatives.

When it comes to the AARP, this is no small endorsement. For more than 50 years, they have been a leader in the fight to reduce the costs of health care and expand coverage for our senior citizens. They are a nonpartisan organization, and their board made their decision to endorse only after a careful, intensive, objective scrutiny of this bill. They're endorsing this bill because they know it will strengthen Medicare, not jeopardize it. They know it will protect the benefits our seniors receive, not cut them. So I want everybody to remember that the next time you hear the same tired arguments to the contrary from the insurance companies and their lobbyists. And remember this endorsement the next time you see a bunch of misleading ads on television.

The AARP knows this bill will make health care more affordable. They know it will make coverage more secure. They know it's a good deal for our seniors. And that's why we're thrilled that they're standing up for this effort.

The same is true for the doctors and medical professionals who are supporting this bill today. These are men and women who know our health care system best and have been watching this debate closely. They would not be supporting it if they really believed that it would lead to Government bureaucrats making decisions that are best left to doctors. They would not be with us if they believed that reform would in any way damage the critical and sacred doctor-patient relationship.

Instead, they're supporting reform because they've seen firsthand what's broken about our health care system. They've seen what happens when patients can't get the care they need because some insurance company has decided to drop their coverage or water it down. They've seen what happens when a patient is forced to pay out-of-pocket costs of thousands of dollars that she doesn't have to get the treatment she desperately needs. They've seen what happens when patients don't come in for regular checkups or screenings because either their insurance company doesn't cover them or they can't afford health insurance in the first place. And they've seen far, far too much of their time spent filling out forms and haggling with insurance company bureaucrats. So the doctors of America know what needs to be fixed about our health care system. They know that health insurance reform would go a long way toward doing that.

We are closer to passing this reform than ever before. And now that the doctors and medical professionals of America are standing with us, now that the organizations charged with looking out for the interests of seniors are standing with us, we are even closer.

I want to thank both organizations again for their support, and I urge Congress to listen to AARP, listen to the AMA, and pass this reform for hundreds of millions of Americans who will benefit from it. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:20 p.m. in the James S. Brady Press Briefing Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Press Secretary Robert L. Gibbs.

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